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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/348.980	07/07/99	ZHONGDU	L M-6043-US

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MM92/0327

EXAMINER

FLEMING.F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2836

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DATE MAILED: 03/27/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/348,980

Applicant(s)

ZHONGDU, LIU

Examiner

Fritz M. Fleming

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 February 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-114 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claims 1-114 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).


FRITZ FLEMING
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 2100

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-68, drawn to a condition responsive switching circuit, classified in class 307, subclass 116.
 - II. Claims 69-71, drawn to a multipoint random control system, classified in class 307, subclass 114.
 - III. Claims 72-75, drawn to an initialization circuit, classified in class 327, subclass 198.
 - IV. Claims 76-86, drawn to a method for driving a load via a semiconductor switch, classified in class 307, subclass 116
 - V. Claims 87-97, drawn to a method for driving a load via a switch and AC with feedback, classified in class 327, subclass 419.
 - VI. Claims 98-99, drawn to a method for detecting a touch presence, classified in class 340, subclass 573.1.
 - VII. Claims 100-110, drawn to an overcurrent protection circuit, classified in class 361, subclass 87.
 - VIII. Claims 111,112, drawn to a condition responsive switching method, classified in class 307, subclass 116.
 - IX. Claim 113, drawn to an overvoltage protection method, classified in class 361, subclass 86.

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X. Claim 114, drawn to a touch panel, classified in class 340, subclass 573.1.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I,III,VII and X are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, inventions I,III,VII and X have separate utility such as a switch control circuit, a state retention circuit, an overcurrent protection circuit, and a touch panel as each can provide its separate utility without relying upon the other. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

3. Inventions I and III,VII,X are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because claim 1 clearly shows that no details of any of the others are required. The subcombination has separate utility such as functions indicated by each group.

4. Inventions I,II,III,VII and X are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions all have different and independent functions and modes of operation.

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5. Inventions I-X are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the processes can be practiced by other devices using different components.

6. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group X is not required for Group VII, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

9. Claim 1 is generic to a plurality of disclosed patentably distinct species comprising details directed to the control circuit, dynamic feedback, overcurrent protection, touch panel details, initialization circuit details, and sound production details. Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species, even though this requirement is traversed.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record

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showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

10. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143). The restriction is in response to the applicant's previous "elections" which did not result in any reduction in the claims to be examined. The applicant has submitted over 100 claims for examination and is entitled to one patent for one invention. As shown above, numerous separate and distinct "inventions" have been claimed and now applicant must elect one of the groups indicated above.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fritz M. Fleming whose telephone number is 703.308.1483. The examiner can normally be reached on Tu-F 0530-1600.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Josie Ballato can be reached on 703.308.0269. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.308.7722 for regular communications and 703.308.7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.308.1782.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Fleming', with a stylized, overlapping loop.

Fritz M. Fleming
Primary Patent Examiner
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ff
March 26, 2001.